

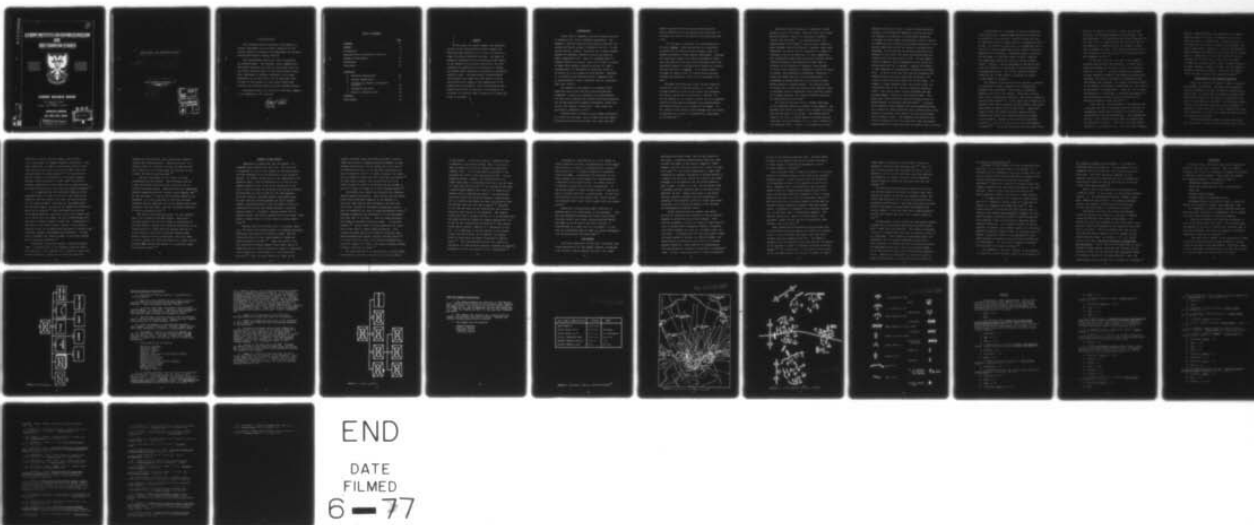
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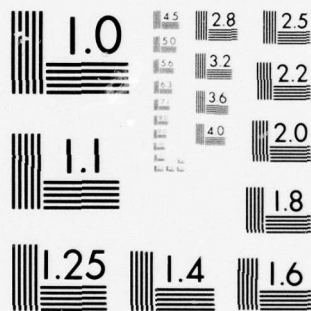
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# US ARMY INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED RUSSIAN AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES



## STUDENT RESEARCH REPORT

MAJ Edward Baisden  
"SOVIET  
SMALL UNIT DEFENSE TACTICS"

GARMISCH, GERMANY

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## F O R E W O R D

This research project represents fulfillment of a student requirement for successful completion of the overseas phase of training of the Department of the Army's Foreign Area Officer Program (Russian).

Only unclassified sources are used in producing the research paper. The opinions, value judgments and conclusions expressed are those of the author and in no way reflect official policy of the United States Government; Department of Defense; Department of the Army; Department of the Army, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff of Intelligence; or the United States Army Institute for Advanced Russian and East European Studies.

Interested readers are invited to send their comments to the Commander of the Institute.

  
RICHARD P. KELLY  
LTC, MI  
Commander

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### SUMMARY

In this paper, the author examines the defensive tactics of the Soviet Motorized Rifle Company and Motorized Rifle Battalion in an effort to provide insight into Soviet defensive doctrine. The paper is primarily concerned with the organization and conduct of the defense on the nuclear battlefield, but also examines the capabilities of the Soviets to conduct the defense under conditions of chemical or biological warfare as well. Although several inconsistencies exist between this paper and other Western sources, particularly with regard to the organization of the company and the battalion, these inconsistencies are simply noted either in the text or in footnotes, as an effort to reconcile them is deemed to be beyond the scope of the paper.

## INTRODUCTION

A great deal of emphasis in Soviet military doctrine is placed on the value of offensive operations. Consequently, much has been written by Western analysts concerning the Soviet concept of offensive tactics. In any future conflict, however, especially one in which nuclear weapons are employed, defensive tactics are going to play a significant role. Even in a campaign which is overall offensive in nature, there will be many instances of small units taking a defensive posture--to repel a counterattack, to consolidate an objective seized in an attack, or as an economy of force measure. Therefore, it is essential that Western military commanders have an understanding of Soviet defensive tactics, especially small unit tactics.

The purpose of this paper is to examine Soviet defensive tactics with the aim of providing Western commanders a vehicle for obtaining this understanding. The basic units examined are the Motorized Rifle Battalion and the Motorized Rifle Company--hereinafter called "battalion" and "company" respectively. These units are described in Appendices A and B.

Original Soviet sources are used almost exclusively as a basis for the paper, and no attempt has been made to reconcile any differences between this paper and other



Western sources which may contain conflicting data.

Unless otherwise noted, the opinions and facts given in the paper are those of the author of the particular work cited.

In this paper, the author has relied heavily on the book, Taktika, which was written by a collective of authors at the Frunze military academy, under the general editorship of Major General Reznichenko. Although this work might appear to be dated (published in 1966), there has been no other open source published since that time which changes to any appreciable degree the concepts and doctrine given in Taktika. It is widely quoted, although not always cited, in current Soviet military journals and newspapers, and is still considered to be valid.

Although considering the attack the most important and decisive form of military action, V.I. Lenin, the ultimate authority as far as the Soviets are concerned, did devote a great deal of attention to defense. He saw the defense not as a goal in itself, but as a temporary condition forced upon the defenders and subordinated by the general interests of the defeat of the enemy. In the conduct of the defense, Lenin demanded that the defenders manifest the utmost in "steadfastness, persistence and selflessness."<sup>1</sup>

The Soviet view of defense as a temporary, forced measure is still held today. They feel that only through decisive offensive action is it possible to achieve victory over the enemy.<sup>2</sup> In contemporary war, the opposing sides will attempt to achieve their respective goals through a decisive offensive. However, given these conditions, the forces will be compelled in a number of instances to go on the defensive, at least temporarily. The circumstances under which the Soviets foresee the possibility of going on the defensive include: when an offensive is not possible or expedient; when economy of force in one direction is indicated to insure an attack in another, more important or beneficial, direction; to secure the flanks and rear of an attacking force; to consolidate a seized objective; or to provide coastal defense against an enemy landing.<sup>3</sup> The specific goals of defense are to repel the attack of the superior forces of the enemy, inflict significant losses upon him, retain the occupied position, and create favorable conditions for going over onto the attack.<sup>4</sup>

As a form of military action, defense lacks many of the advantages which are inherent to the offense. The defenders are forced to depend on the attackers to choose the time and place of the attack. The defense must be ready at all times to defend against an attack from any direction, and the defenders are, as a rule, inferior to the attacking forces. However, the defense has its own

inherent strong points which, if kept in mind and wisely utilized, can overcome the imbalance of forces and give the defender the capability of successfully defeating a stronger attacking enemy. The defender is able to choose his defensive area, insuring the maximum utilization of the natural characteristics of the terrain to provide him an advantage. He can fortify the defensive positions with obstacles of all types, and create firing positions with overhead cover and good fields of fire. He can preplan routes of maneuver for the deployment of his forces in a counterattack and can, in general, organize his defense to take advantage of interdependent obstacles and planned fires. In spite of the fact that both the attackers and defenders may be using the same types of weapons, the results of the battle will differ for the two sides. For example, a single defending tank, dug in with cover, can successfully take on two, three or even more attacking tanks.<sup>5</sup> The Soviets count on every defending tank and antitank weapon to knock out two attacking tanks. This means that a Motorized Rifle Battalion should be able to defend against an attacking tank battalion.<sup>6</sup> A nuclear strike against a well deployed and covered defending force will produce far fewer casualties than a similar sized strike against an attacking force which is forced to move openly across exposed terrain. The defenders also have the capability of enhancing their fire plan since they can prepare firing tables for a given area and can register their artillery.



In the defense it is possible to utilize camouflage very effectively, creating dummy equipment and positions and hiding the true positions, thereby causing the enemy to expend his efforts on empty spaces or unimportant objects.<sup>7</sup> In fact, the success of small units in contemporary battle can be to a certain significant degree assured by skillful application of camouflage. Camouflage makes it difficult for the enemy to effectively employ nuclear, chemical or conventional weapons and serves to reduce friendly losses.<sup>8</sup> Finally, a better knowledge of the battle area gives the defenders the advantage of greater flexibility in maneuvering forces. All of this creates favorable conditions for a small number of defenders to defeat a large number of attackers.

The strength of the overall Soviet defense is achieved by echeloning in depth, extensive use of engineering equipment and camouflage.<sup>9</sup> The concept of echeloned defense is not new to the Soviets. World War I saw the first use of echeloning as opposed to the earlier formations of units with reserves.<sup>10</sup> In the early part of World War II, because of the overall weakness of their forces, the Soviets were forced to employ units on wide fronts. These units fought in only one echelon and had a general reserve. Artillery was formed into artillery groups for support to the infantry. Because of the scarcity of antitank artillery, it was not the practice to hold these weapons in reserve.<sup>11</sup> As the war progressed and the Soviet Union

built up its supply of artillery, tanks, and antitank artillery, an echeloned defense was reintroduced. The mass employment of 152-mm howitzer-guns and 203-mm howitzers for direct fire at tanks was seen for the first time in the defense of a counterattack by the Germans to seize Kiev in November of 1943. This massing of antitank artillery resulted in densities of up to 350 artillery pieces per kilometer of front.<sup>12</sup>

By the end of the war, the role of the infantry battalion had increased significantly. At that time, a battalion defended an area with a front of 2-3 km and a depth of 1.5-2 km.<sup>13</sup> Antitank defense was considered the most important element of the defensive position and, therefore, the density and depth of echeloning of antitank weapons was increased. To increase the effectiveness of the defense, the battalion established antitank "centers-of-resistance" or strong points. There was also a change from defense of a broad zone to orienting the defense on the direction of expected attack and increasing the density of weapons in that direction.<sup>14</sup>

After the war, the development of the infantry continued with the idea of equipping them with the best in contemporary weapons and increasing their mobility and maneuverability through mechanization. This improved the quality of the infantry and gave them new capabilities for employment in battle. Motorized forces have gained importance in contemporary war. They have great firepower,

mobility, maneuverability, and capabilities to conduct military operations either in combination with other types of forces or independently. Motorized forces are now armed with the latest in weaponry and equipment, and have a cross-country capability. They are significantly better equipped and armed than their World War II counterparts. A comparison of today's motorized unit and an infantry unit of World War II shows that the number of tanks has increased some 16 times, personnel carriers--37 times, automatic weapons--13 times, and the number of radios has increased fivefold. Naturally, the quality of all of these items has also greatly increased.<sup>15</sup>

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE DEFENSIVE POSITION

Today the Soviets still adhere to what is basically an antitank, area defense. Although Soviet defensive doctrine recognizes two types of defense (deliberate and hasty) there is a great deal of similarity between them. They differ primarily in the degree of preparation that goes into the defensive positions. The deliberate defense is most often employed, although the hasty defense is employed, at least initially, by first echelon units when their offensive action has been stopped and they are still in contact with the enemy.

The Motorized Rifle Regiment and Motorized Rifle Division conduct a deeply echeloned defense with several

positions for the disposition of troops and antitank weapons.<sup>16</sup> As a rule, the battalion and company conduct the defense as a part of the regiment, but they may be separated from the main force and established in positions in the security zone, in a forward position, or as an outpost.<sup>17</sup> When operating as part of the first echelon, the battalion will "...inflict losses on enemy personnel and equipment, hold key terrain, prevent penetrations, and create favorable conditions for destroying the enemy by nuclear strikes or by a counterattack by units of the second echelon."<sup>18</sup>

The task of a battalion in the second echelon is to insure the destruction of enemy penetrations. It can be used to fill a gap in the first echelon caused by a unit being rendered ineffective by a nuclear strike. It may also be called on to reinforce or replace a first echelon unit or to defend the rear.<sup>19</sup>

The battalion normally defends in one echelon and maintains a reserve of one reinforced platoon, however, in some cases, deployed on the main direction of the enemy advance, it may be in two echelons. When the battalion is defending in a one-echelon formation it defends an area five kilometers wide and two kilometers deep. When deployed in two echelons, the battalion frontage is reduced to 3-4 km while the depth remains two kilometers.<sup>21</sup> The frontages and depths of defensive positions are given in Appendix C. The basis of the battalion defense is a



configuration of company sized strong points. These company strong points have a front of up to one kilometer and a depth of five-hundred meters. They are located one to one and a half kilometers apart.<sup>22</sup> Although a company strong point is organized for all-round defense, it is oriented on the direction of the greatest tank threat.<sup>23</sup>

The Soviets learned very well at the Battle of Kursk the value of having connecting trenches between defensive positions to increase their ability to move forces along the front and to the rear without detection by the enemy.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, if there is sufficient time, the strong points are improved with internal communications trenches so as to provide covered routes of movement within the strong point and within the battalion area of defense.<sup>25</sup> At a minimum, however, every individual soldier has a foxhole. Squad-sized positions of paired foxholes and revetments for the armored personnel carriers (BMP's) -- all connected by trenches with overhead cover -- are desired.<sup>26</sup> The BMP's are made an integral part of the defense and are dug into revetted firing positions within the defensive position, as are supporting tanks.<sup>27</sup> Typical company and battalion positions are shown in Appendices D and E.

Before the attack, all personnel except machine gunners and grenadiers are used to emplace obstacles and improve the defensive position.<sup>28</sup> When going on the

defensive in contact with the enemy, there usually isn't time enough for complete engineer preparations. Under these conditions, the BMP's occupy firing positions where they can cover their own forces by fire while the defensive positions are being prepared.<sup>29</sup> First priority of effort is given to construction of individual foxholes and main firing positions for tanks, BMP's and mortars. Of lesser importance is the preparation of squad positions and reserve positions for the tanks and supporting weapons.<sup>30</sup>

It is expected that all individual foxholes can be prepared within 2-3 hours of the time a unit goes on the defensive, and that within 5-10 hours the main positions for the tanks and BMP's, positions for the machine guns and antitank weapons, as well as the command and observation posts can be prepared.<sup>31</sup> When the defensive positions are being prepared by a battalion in the first echelon that is in contact with the enemy, the use of engineering equipment may be limited because of enemy fire. Preparation of positions in the second echelon, however, can be greatly enhanced by the use of engineering equipment of various types -- including automatic ditchdiggers and bulldozers. In some cases, revetments for tanks and BMP's in the first echelon may be dug using explosives.<sup>32</sup>

Conducting a successful defense, especially against tanks, is possible only if the defenders have well fortified positions. The commander must, therefore, insure that his men continually improve their defensive positions.

Besides the main position, each soldier must prepare a reserve and a dummy position. During the battle, the soldier should not continue to occupy the same position for a long time, but should change his position so that he won't be detected and destroyed.<sup>33</sup>

The basis of defense at all levels is a well-established antitank defense. Each defending tank has a main and reserve firing position selected so as to provide all-round defense. These positions are camouflaged, mutually supporting and have covered routes between them.<sup>34</sup> As the tank threat is seen as the principle danger to the defenders, it is not surprising to note that antitank obstacles play an important role in the defense plan. These obstacles, like all others, are only considered effective if they are covered by fire.<sup>35</sup>

The Soviets feel that all troops, not just infantry, need to be trained in antitank defense. They have a training program that has five stages of instruction in antitank defense, ranging from classroom instruction in the characteristics of enemy tanks and armored vehicles to actual practical exercises in antitank defense using Molotov cocktails and an inconspicuous "wire net" which is used to tangle the tracks and wheels of a combat vehicle, hindering its movement and making it a convenient target for antitank weapons.<sup>36</sup>



### CONDUCT OF THE DEFENSE

Immediately on going over onto the defense, the commander must establish his fire plan. The fire plan is organized so that it will support an all-round defense and take advantage of the peculiarities of the defensive terrain. It should include fires on the approaches to the defensive area, a zone of unbroken fire in front of the forward defensive line, fires on the flanks and in the rear, as well as plans for shifting fires during the battle. The plan must not only include all the usual weapons -- artillery, mortars, antitank weapons, and machine guns, but must also now include planning the use of nuclear weapons; organizing fires so that the enemy is forced to concentrate his forces and thereby present a lucrative nuclear target.<sup>37</sup> In general, nuclear weapons will be employed against the nuclear capabilities of the enemy, large masses of enemy forces, or other targets of great importance.<sup>38</sup>

Planning effective antitank fires is extremely important. The battle with armored targets is assuming increasing importance, particularly in defensive combat, when the attacking forces will have large numbers of tanks and armored personnel carriers.<sup>39</sup> Tanks have proven to be very effective in defense against other tanks, and it is common practice to attach a platoon of tanks to a motorized rifle company and a tank company to a motorized rifle battalion.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the main targets for tanks in the

defense are enemy tanks and armored personnel carriers. Tanks may be used in organized antitank ambushes in gaps between strong points, on the flanks and in the rear of the defensive position, or in any other area which cannot be covered by fire.<sup>41</sup> In these instances, the tanks will be ordered to hold their fire until the last minute.<sup>42</sup> In other cases, however, the concentrated fire of an entire platoon of tanks in the defense may be brought to bear on a target at ranges up to three thousand meters.<sup>43</sup>

The Soviets also realize the necessity for effective defense against helicopters. They realize that the United States has placed great emphasis on the maneuver of forces by army aviation and helicopters, and feel that this force, through its firepower and mobility, may be used to accomplish the tasks of armored/mechanized forces.<sup>44</sup> Although recognizing the vulnerability of the helicopter, they feel that it is clear "...that the armed helicopter has become an extremely effective weapon... in antitank warfare."<sup>45</sup> Current armor training emphasizes the training of tank crews to combat armed helicopters. This training includes special fire missions using the tank-mounted machine guns against aircraft and helicopters.<sup>46</sup> It is felt that the crews of low-flying helicopters are lucrative targets for snipers, and sniper training includes firing at this type of target.<sup>47</sup>

The counterattack is an integral part of Soviet defensive doctrine, and plays a decisive role in the conduct

of the defense. It was first used as a defensive form of maneuver in positional warfare, when it was used to repel an enemy force that had temporarily penetrated friendly lines. It was used almost exclusively to reestablish the lines to the pre-attack position. In contemporary warfare, however, the counterattack is no longer used simply to reestablish positions, but has taken on a much more decisive role.<sup>48</sup> The possibility of using a nuclear weapon against the reserve of an enemy in conjunction with a counterattack against his penetrating force has created the situation whereby a counterattack may be a decisive blow which can take the initiative from the attacker and turn the tide of battle.<sup>49</sup> Selection of the time and place of the counterattack are critical factors in the success of the operation. The counterattack will tend to be most decisive if it is delivered when the enemy attack has reached its deepest penetration, but he has not yet consolidated his position.<sup>50</sup> The counterattack can be frontal, flanking or a combination of the two. It is important to achieve surprise in the counterattack, and the skillful use of surprise can greatly assist in overcoming the enemy's advantage of superior forces.<sup>51</sup> The counterattacking force will usually be tank-heavy, as tanks provide essential firepower and mobility necessary to insure the success of the counterattack.<sup>52</sup>

Although the counterattack is a vital element of Soviet defensive doctrine, the capabilities of the company and battalion to conduct a counterattack are limited.<sup>53</sup> The counterattack is normally conducted at regimental level and higher. A motorized rifle battalion in the first echelon will either support the counterattack by a battalion of the second echelon, or combine with it to provide a larger force for the counterattack. If the second echelon is under nuclear attack, it may not be able to provide forces for a counterattack. In this case, the battalion of the first echelon will secure its position and hold until a unit from a higher level can counterattack.<sup>54</sup>

Conducting a counterattack under conditions of darkness may be very advantageous to the defenders. They have the advantage of knowing the terrain across which they must attack, and a night counterattack may delude the enemy as to the size of the force involved. A counterattack by a light force on the flanks or in the rear of an attacking enemy at night may create disorganization and panic within the enemy ranks.<sup>55</sup>

#### CBR DEFENSE

The Soviet experience in World War I has given them a deep appreciation for the dangers inherent in fighting a war in which chemical weapons are used. The tragic



experience the Soviet Union had with gas warfare at that time -- suffering fatalities more than five times (56,000) the number of her nearest competitor (9000), Germany, left her with the resolve not to ever be caught short again.<sup>56</sup> The Soviet preparedness to fight under conditions of chemical, biological or nuclear warfare is a subject that would far exceed the scope of this paper, although it is an important one and should always be kept in mind. Suffice it to say, that the Soviet Army is probably the best prepared army in the world from a CBR point of view. Almost every issue of the Soviet military journals contains an article pertaining to training of the individual soldier to fight under these conditions, or an article pertaining to the training and performance of chemical troops.

Soviet military doctrine assumes that modern war will be conducted with chemical and bacteriological weapons in conjunction with nuclear weapons. This doctrine presupposes the use of "weapons of mass destruction" (a phrase which encompasses chemical, biological and nuclear weapons) not only on a strategic scale, but tactically. In keeping with this doctrine, Soviet troops are being trained to operate in a CBR environment, and indoctrinated to believe in their ability to overcome whatever obstacles, either physical or psychological, they may encounter in crossing or operating in contaminated zones. In fact, these zones may be created deliberately

as part of the defensive obstacle plan. Possible denial of areas to the enemy by the use of "nuclear land mines" to create zones of radioactive contamination is part of Soviet defensive doctrine.<sup>57</sup>

One of the best ways to reduce the effects of a nuclear strike is to disperse forces so that they do not provide a lucrative target. Soviet doctrine calls for battalions to be dispersed so that a 20 kt weapon will not hit two units; companies are to be dispersed so that two units cannot be hit by a single nuclear weapon in the 1-20 kt range; and platoons should be dispersed so that a nuclear weapon of less than 1 kt will not strike more than one.<sup>58</sup> When units are not in an active combat role they must be even more widely dispersed to protect them from nuclear attack. A battalion is supposed to be dispersed throughout a 10 km<sup>2</sup> area, with 1.5 km between companies. The vehicles should be at least 10-15 meters apart. All personnel, except drivers, who are to remain with their vehicles, are to be dug in.<sup>59</sup>

While dispersing the defending forces provides them with excellent protection against the effects of a nuclear attack, it also increases the chances that they can be attacked from an unexpected direction. This makes it mandatory that the defense be all-round and that the defenders be prepared to fight in whichever direction the threat appears.<sup>60</sup> The organization of the defense must be rapid, as the increased mobility and nuclear firepower of today's

armies make it possible for the attacker to deal the defenders a decisive blow from the outset.<sup>61</sup> While the use of nuclear weapons has increased the threat to the defenders, it has, at the same time, given the defenders the capability to launch a decisive strike themselves, thereby taking the initiative and going over onto the offensive.<sup>62</sup>

The above-mentioned dispersal measures are not the only actions taken by the Soviets to protect their units against the effects of nuclear and chemical attacks. The Soviet Army was noted for its use of fortifications and earthworks in World War II, and today particularly stresses shelters and bunkers for protection from chemical and nuclear weapons. It is felt that even a simple defensive position will reduce the effects of a nuclear weapon by half.<sup>63</sup>

Reconnaissance is also carried out from special bunkers, equipped with the necessary monitoring and survey instruments, rather than from vehicles. Each bunker is assigned a sector of responsibility much like the sector of fire for an infantryman. These chemical reconnaissance posts also undoubtedly serve as regular observation posts since their functions are similar and they are tactically placed in advantageous positions, such as on battalion flanks and in the unoccupied areas within the battalion defensive sector. Chemical reconnaissance is carried out both in place, from the bunkers, and on periodic foot patrols in



the sector of responsibility.<sup>64</sup>

In order for the soldiers of a unit to maintain their positions in a contaminated zone in the defense, it is necessary for the commander of the unit to equip these dug-outs or shelters with filtered ventilation systems so that a place for feeding and an occasional rest break is available.<sup>65</sup> There are a variety of portable filters and blowers available which can provide purified air for these shelters. Most of these items are motor driven, but may be operated by hand in the event of a power failure.

It is common practice for a squad or a small detachment of 4-5 chemically trained troops to be detached for support to a company sized combat arms unit,<sup>66</sup> and recent articles in the Soviet military journals tend to indicate that chemical decontamination companies are sometimes attached to motorized rifle<sup>67</sup> or tank<sup>68</sup> battalions. These chemical troops are particularly important during defensive operations. It is hoped to offset, as much as possible, the dangers from chemical weapons in a stationary defense by frequent movement within the assigned sector of defense. Especially feared is the employment of toxic agents during the confusion associated with artillery and air bombardments. For this reason, masking is standard practice under these types of attacks.<sup>69</sup>

The commander of any unit, chemical or non-chemical, is required to conduct frequent checks on the condition of

the chemical equipment and instruments, to include the individual means of protection. In the defense it is recommended that this be done not less than once every two-three days. The Soviet battalion commander is also expected to be able to calculate the size of contaminated areas and the length of time of the stability of the particular toxic agent employed.<sup>70</sup>

After a unit in the defense has been subjected to a chemical attack, it will conduct its own partial decontamination of the contaminated positions, weapons, equipment, ammunition and personnel. The complete decontamination and treatment process will not be done until the unit has been moved to a position in the rear.<sup>71</sup>

The Soviets feel that well trained and equipped troops can overcome the effects of a nuclear or chemical strike and maintain their combat effectiveness. The efforts that they have expended to insure that their troops are well trained and equipped are not equalled by any other army in the world. They are confident that they can provide adequate defense against any of the weapons of mass destruction they expect to encounter. As V. Ye. Savkin states in his book, The Basic Principles of Operational Art and Tactics, "Still, one has to consider that if nuclear attacks are made against troops who have foreseen the possibility of their use and who have taken appropriate defensive measures (especially concealed maneuver), then, the effectiveness of such attacks will be reduced to a minimum."<sup>72</sup>

### CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen, the Soviets feel that an aggressive offense is the best way to success. They do, however, recognize that it will be necessary in a number of instances to take up a tactical defense. They regard the defense as a temporary measure to be adopted in order to:

- Consolidate captured objectives.
- Secure the flanks and rear of an attacking force.
- Gain time.
- Provide coastal defense.
- Provide cover for withdrawing forces.
- Economize forces in one area in order to insure the success of an attack in another, more important, area.

It is difficult to distill Soviet defensive doctrine down into basic principles or fundamentals, but an attempt to do this would certainly include the following:

--Units in the defense will hold their positions in spite of all difficulties and losses. First echelon units are expected to continue to defend their positions even if they are surrounded, and troops are expected to sacrifice themselves to this end if necessary.<sup>73</sup>

-- The basis of any defense is the destruction of tanks. All units are provided with antitank protection, and all troops are trained in antitank defense. The Soviets expect to face a tank-heavy attacking force, and feel that if they can stop the tanks then they can stop the attack.

--A great deal of attention is given to effective use of obstacles and firepower. Commanders are expected to utilize the natural characteristics of the terrain to the maximum in organizing the defense and insure that fire and obstacle plans are mutually supporting and effective. The gaps between units are covered by observation and fire and are frequently established as antitank killing zones with tank ambushes and land mines.<sup>74</sup>

--Although counterattacks are not generally employed at company and battalion level, the counterattack is a vital part of Soviet defensive doctrine, and the battalion may be called upon to act as a counterattacking force from the second echelon of the regiment. Counterattacks are well planned, and may be executed in conjunction with a nuclear strike on the enemy's reserve in an attempt to seize the initiative.

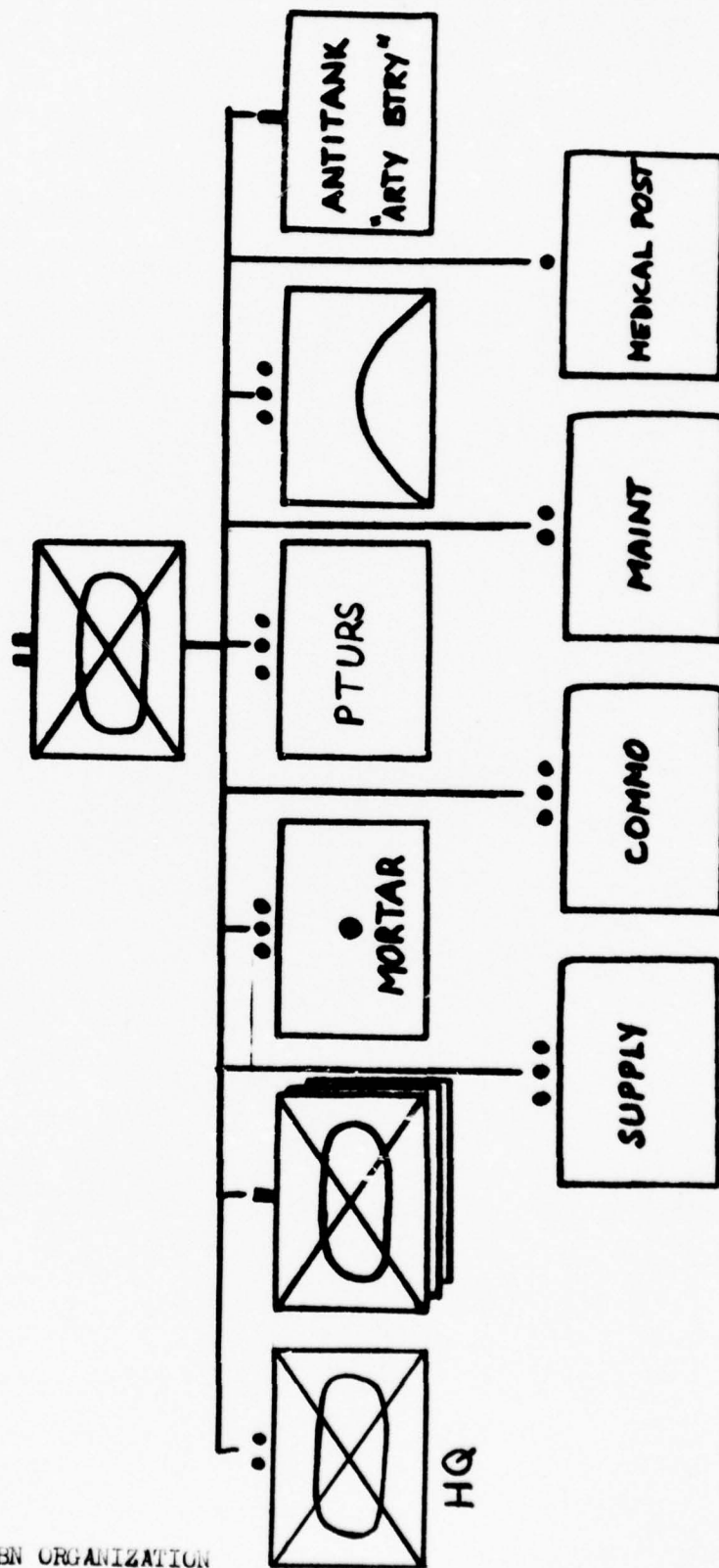
--Soviet units are well prepared and equipped to fight both offensively and defensively in a CBR environment, and expect any future war to be conducted under these conditions.

--The overall strength of the Soviet defense lies in a system of mutually supporting strong points which are echeloned in depth and established for all-round defense. These strong points are well dispersed to provide protection against nuclear attack, and are protected by mutually supporting direct fires, artillery and mortar fires, as well



as by engineer obstacles and minefields. The troops are protected by an elaborate system of interconnected bunkers and trenches, and are continually working to improve their defensive positions.

It should never be forgotten, however, that this entire defensive system is established only as a temporary, forced measure. The main goal of any defending Soviet commander is, by doctrine, to create favorable conditions for going over to a decisive attack. Any force attacking a Soviet defensive position should always be prepared for the defenders to attempt to seize the initiative and take the offensive.



APPENDIX A: BN ORGANIZATION

#### NOTES ON BATTALION ORGANIZATION:

1. The battalion mortar platoon is equipped with 3 x 120 mm mortars.
2. There are three SAGGER man-pack teams in the battalion PTURS (Protivotankovye Upravliaemye Reaktivnye Snariady -- anti-tank guided missiles) Platoon.
3. It is not clear what the organic "anti-aircraft rocket complex" is armed with. There may also be additional anti-aircraft assets present in the form of ZSU-23-4 SP anti-aircraft guns attached from regimental assets.
4. The antitank "artillery battery" has two platoons with 2 x 82 mm antitank guns each. These guns are, however, being phased out for newer weapons (SPG-9).
5. Usual attachments to the battalion include a tank company, artillery battalion, engineer-sapper platoon, and a small detachment of chemical reconnaissance troops.
6. The number of APC's in a battalion depends on the type of APC used. Battalions equipped with the BMP have one APC per squad. The BMP is armed with a SAGGER launcher, a smooth-bore antitank gun, and a 7.62 mm co-ax machine gun.
7. The battalion has 30 officers:  
  
Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer  
Political Officer  
Chief of Staff  
Adjutant (Assistant to the Chief of Staff)  
Technical Officer  
Mortar Platoon Leader  
ATGM Platoon Leader  
Antitank Artillery Battery Commander  
Supply Platoon Leader  
Commo Platoon Leader  
Medical Officer  
18 Company Officers
8. As already mentioned, there are several inconsistencies between this organization and that given in other Western sources. This organization was developed from Soviet sources only -- primarily Taktika, Posobie dlia ofitserov zapasa motostrelkovykh i tankovykh voisk, and Vspomogatel'nye i spravochnye dannye k takticheskoi igre na kartakh (while



not a "Soviet" source, still compiled from Soviet sources), as well as personal discussions with Mr. G. M. Viktorov, Professor of Military Science at the US Army Institute for Advanced Russian and East European Studies. Mr. Viktorov follows the Soviet military press closely and is extremely knowledgeable in Soviet military affairs. The author makes no claim that he is "right" on any of these matters and only wishes to note that these inconsistencies exist. It must be remembered that not all Soviet units will be organized and equipped identically. There will be basic differences depending on the location of the unit, state of readiness, etc.

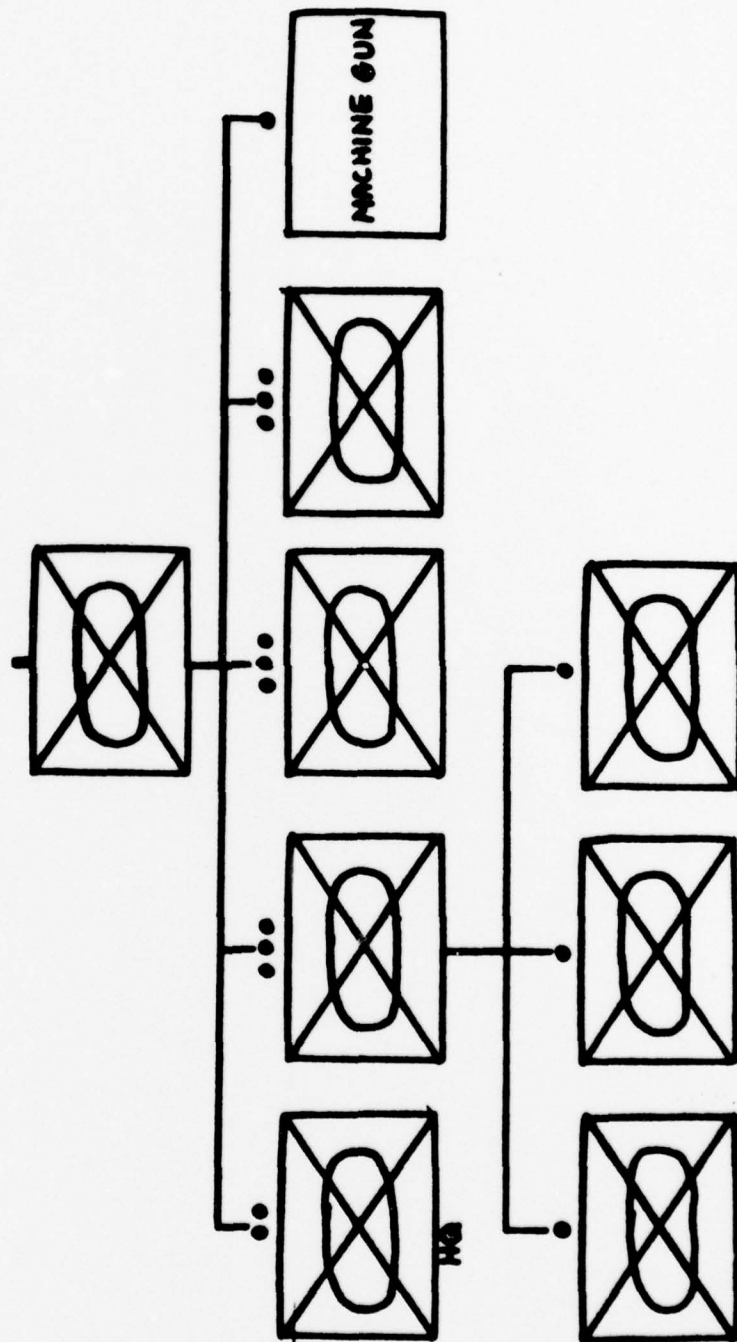
A. Number of 120 mm mortars in the battalion:  
FM 30-40 and TC 30-4 state that there are six mortars.

B. Number of SAGGER man-pack teams in the battalion:  
TC 30-4 states that there are only two man-pack launchers in the battalion.

C. Existence of organic anti-aircraft defense at battalion level: FM 30-40 and TC 30-4 make no mention of organic anti-aircraft capability at battalion level. While it is not clear what this unit is armed with, it does appear clear that there is an anti-aircraft unit in the battalion. (See also, V. Subbotin, "PVO takticheskovo desanta" (Anti-aircraft Defense of a Tactical Airdrop), Voennyi Vestnik, No. 10 (October, 1975), p. 91).

D. Caliber of the main gun on the BMP: Although all Western sources state that the smooth-bore gun on the BMP is 73 mm, the author himself found nothing to indicate the caliber of this weapon.

E. Number of officers in the battalion: TC 30-4 states that there are 33 officers in the battalion. This is not simply an inconsistency in numbers, but is a basic difference in organization; i.e., "Which platoon leaders are officers?", "How many officers are there in the headquarters section?", etc.



APPENDIX B: COMPANY ORGANIZATION

NOTES ON COMPANY ORGANIZATION:

1. The company machine gun squad has 3 x RPK machine guns. FM 30-40 and TC 30-102 do not indicate that a machine gun squad exists. The presence of this unit may be directly related to the type of personnel carrier the company has - i.e., when the company has BMP's it does not have a machine gun squad.

2. The company will usually have a tank platoon attached, and may have additional artillery, engineer and chemical reconnaissance assets attached.

3. The company has six officers:

Company Commander  
Political Officer  
Technical Officer  
3 Platoon Leaders

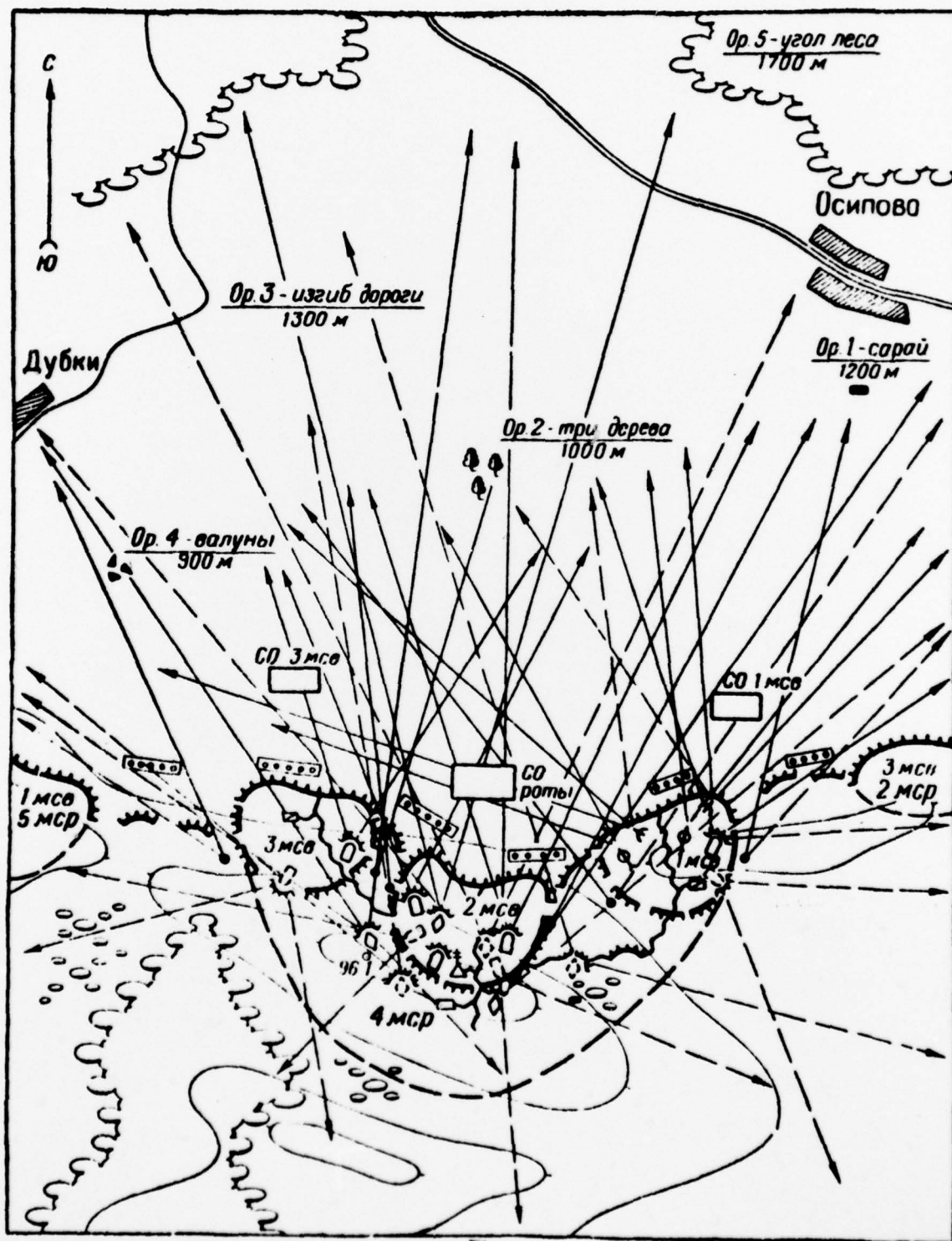
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UNIT & AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	FRONTAGE	DEPTH
SQUAD "POSITION"	50-60 Meters	
PLATOON "STRONG POINT"	300 Meters	200 Meters
COMPANY "STRONG POINT"	Up to 1 km	Up to 500 Meters
BATTALION "DEFENSIVE AREA"	Up to 5 km	Up to 2 km
REGIMENT "DEFENSIVE SECTOR"	10-15 km	6 km
DIVISION "DEFENSIVE BELT"	30 km	12-15 km

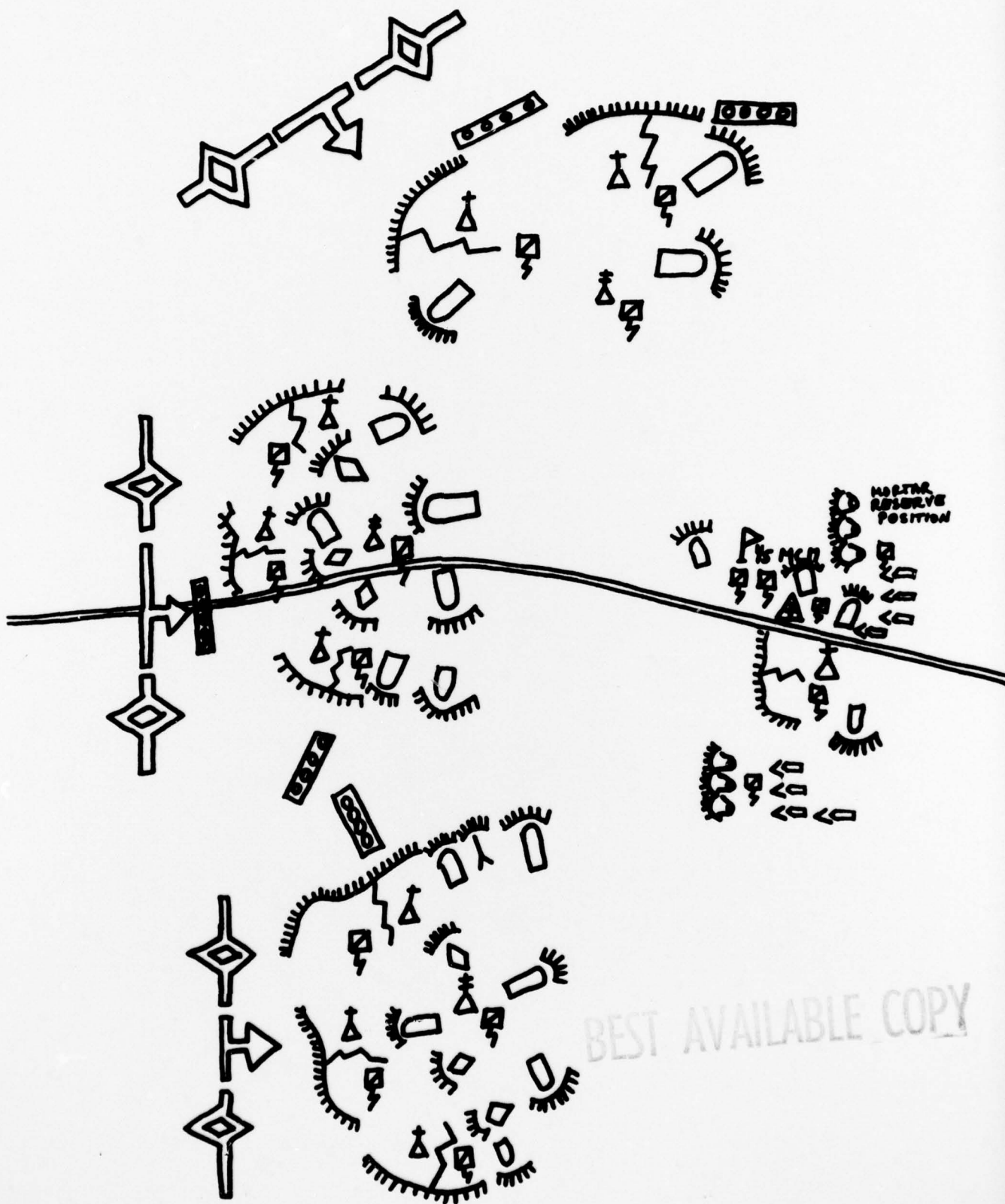
APPENDIX C: FRONTAGES AND DEPTHS OF DEFENSIVE POSITIONS <sup>75</sup>



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APPENDIX D: COMPANY STRONG POINT (KEY ON PAGE 32)



APPENDIX E: BATTALION DEFENSIVE AREA<sup>77</sup> (KEY ON PAGE 32)

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Firing position for tank



Firing position for APC



Firing position for RPG



Firing position for 120 mm mortar



Shelter for wheeled vehicle



Company machine gun



Recoilless rifle



Squad trench



Commo trench

Dugout



Light Shelter



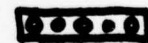
AP Minefield



AT Minefield



Mixed AP & AT  
Minefield



Platoon CP



Company CP



HQ, 1st Battalion,  
5th Motorized  
Rifle Regiment

P 1/5 MCN

Battalion Medical  
Point



#### FOOTNOTES

1. V.Reznichenko, editor, Taktika (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo ministerstva oborony, SSSR, 1966), pp. 13-14. This book was written by a collective of authors at the Frunze military academy, under the general editorship of Major General Reznichenko. It is an excellent work on basic Soviet military doctrine and provides the basis for a major portion of this paper.

2. Ibid., p, 320.

3. Ibid.

4. P.F. Rodionova, editor, Posobie dlia ofitserov zapasa motostrelkovykh i tankovykh voisk (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo ministerstva oborony, SSSR, 1973), p. 221. This, too, is an excellent work and was very useful in the preparation of this paper. It is written to assist reserve officers and students of military subjects in their preparation.

5. Reznichenko, p. 72.

6. Ibid., p. 337.

7. Ibid., p. 72-73.

8. S. Konaratenko and A. Molodtsov, Obuchenie voisk maskirovke (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo ministerstva oborony, SSSR, 1969), p.3.

9. Rodionova, p. 221.

10. Reznichenko, p. 330.

11. Ibid., p. 332.

12. L. Kozlov, "Repulsing a Counterstroke," Soviet Military Review, No. 12 (December 1973), pp. 42-44.

13. Reznichenko, p. 333.

14. V. Reznichenko, "Taktiki v gody velikoi otechestvennoi voiny," Voennyi vestnik, No. 4 (April 1975), pp. 49-54.

15. Rodionova, pp. 46-47.

16. Ibid., p. 222

17. Ibid., p. 223.

18. Reznichenko, Taktika, pp. 333-334.



19. Ibid., p. 334
20. P. Vashurin, "Aktivnost' oborony," Voennyi vestnik, No. 3 (March, 1971), p. 27.
21. Reznichenko, Taktika, pp. 335-338.
22. Ibid., p. 336
23. Ibid., p. 343.
24. Ibid., p. 342
25. V. Pliaskin, et al., Inzhenernoe obespechenie obshchevoiskovogo boia (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo ministerstva oborony, SSSR, 1972), p. 233. This book provides a good discussion of the preparation of defensive positions from an engineer standpoint. It is the source for the company and battalion positions shown in Appendices D & E.
26. A. Kobenko, "Zakreplenie zakhvachennykh rubezhei," Voennyi vestnik, No. 10 (October, 1974), p. 99.
27. Pliaskin, p. 234. TC 30-102 states that BMP's are dug in on reverse slopes, although the schematic on page 21 does show them emplaced in firing positions in accordance with Soviet doctrine.
28. Kobenko, p. 98.
29. R. Dukov, Motostrelkovoe otdelenie v boiu (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo ministerstva oborony, SSSR, 1973), p. 57. Although this book deals with the defense at squad level, the principles involved can be applied at least up through battalion level.
30. Reznichenko, Taktika, pp. 343-345.
31. Pliaskin, p. 237.
32. Kobenko, p. 98.
33. Dukov, p. 53-54.
34. Rodionova, p. 225.
35. Pliaskin, p. 240.
36. N. Kotov, "Obuchenie bor'be s tankami," Voennyi vestnik, No. 1 (January 1974), pp. 61-62.
37. Reznichenko, Taktika, p. 350.
38. Ibid.

39. V. Sellavin and L. Veselov, "Kogda batal'on vedet oboronitel'nyi boi," Voennyi vestnik, No. 1 (January 1975), p. 87.
40. Vashurin, p. 27.
41. Ibid.
42. Loskutnikov, "Otrazhenie kontrataki," Voennyi vestnik, No. 10 (October 1974), p. 15.
43. E. Sherstobitov, "Oborona podrazdelenii," Voennyi vestnik, No. 7 (July 1971), p. 17.
44. Reznichenko, Taktika, pp. 325-326.
45. M. Belov, "Ataka na vertoletakh", Krasnaia zvezda, January 24, 1975, p. 3.
46. B. Gudymenko, "Tankostrelkovaia trenirovka so strel'boi po samoletam i vertoletam," Voennyi vestnik, No. 8 (August, 1974) pp. 44-47.
47. S. Umanets, "Podgotovka snaiперov," Voennyi vestnik, No.1 (January 1974), pp. 106-110.
48. Reznichenko, Taktika, p. 360.
49. Ibid., p. 326.
50. Ibid., p. 362
51. Dukov, p. 64.
52. Reznichenko, Taktika, p. 362.
53. Sherstobitov, p. 12.
54. Reznichenko, Taktika, p. 363.
55. Ibid., p. 364.
56. U.S. Army Chemical Center and School, The Story of Chemical and Biological Agents and Weapons (Washington, 1968), p. 45.
57. Reznichenko, Taktika, p. 353.
58. Ibid., p. 327.
59. Rodionova, pp. 239-240.

60. Reznichenko, Taktika, p. 328.
61. Ibid., p. 353.
62. Ibid., p. 324.
63. Ibid. p.343
64. A. Moskalov, "Zashchita podrazdelenii v oborone," Voennyi vestnik, No 9 (September 1971), pp. 33-34.
65. Ibid., p. 33.
66. V. Shubin, "Attention: Contaminated Sector," Military Herald No. 6 (June 1972), p. 27.
67. N. Ivashentsev and Iu. Sal'nikov, "Osobennosti spetsial'noi obrabotki nochiu," Voennyi vestnik, No. 2 (February 1974), pp. 103-106.
68. A. Mikhailov, "Deistviia roty spetsial'noi obrabotki," Voennyi vestnik, No. 9 (September 1974), pp 28-32.
69. Ibid., p. 32.
70. Ibid., p. 34.
71. Dukov, p. 65.
72. V. Savkin, Osnovnye printsipy operativnovo iskustva i taktiki (Moscow: Voennoe izdatel'stvo ministerstva oborony, SSSR, 1972).
73. Sherstobutov, p. 12.
74. V. Zhukov, "Oborona batal'ona zimoi," Voennyi vestnik, No.2 (February 1971), p. 42.
75. Frontage for the squad is taken from Posobie dlia ofitserov zapasa motostrelkovykh i tankovykh voisk, p. 223. Dimensions for platoon, company, and battalion are taken from Taktika, pp. 336-337. Dimensions for regiment and division are taken from Taktika, sluzhba shtabov i tyla sa.
76. Schematic taken from Voennaia topografiia, p. 21.
77. Schematic taken from Inzhenernoe obespechenie obschchevoiskovo boia, p. 234.

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